3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5



girl's former nurse girl and had continued to take an interest 881
in the girl. This woman came to the hut, gave the girl a cloth to wear, told her to stay in the hut until the period was over, and instructed her companion to stay with her, bring her food, and look after her other needs. When the period was over, the companion told the senior helper who in the meantime had informed the girl's paternal grandmother, her father's sister (to whom a special message was sent to the village where she lived), and the girl's own mother. The information was always given in the phrase, 'This child has now matured.' The father's sister, who made a special visit for the [604] ●
purpose, came into the hut and told the girl to get up and follow her. A little procession formed, the father's sister leading, the girl immediately behind her, then the grandmother and other senior women of the father's house, the senior helper who had attended the girl, and finally the girl's mother. At the river the girl was made to take off her clothes [823]
and sit in shallow water, facing south-east, the ritual position adopted in all Ngoni crises of life and death. On the bank the women stood in silence and watched the girl splashing herself with water and trying to control her shivering, until she was allowed to come out and given clean clothes to put on.

Back at the grandmother's hut, the women sat on the veranda, the girl in front of them, legs tucked in sideways, head bent in a respectful attitude. The father's sister led off with some matter-of-fact instructions to the girl. At subsequent periods she would not be in seclusion but she would take every care to conceal her condition from everyone. She must always wear a cloth between her legs, whether menstruating or not, and she must now consider herself separated from the children's and the immature girls' groups. She would sleep only with mature girls in a senior helper's hut, and must wash in the river only with them, and never anywhere near young children or immature girls. Later on, not on this 881
occasion, the senior helper who had assisted her and felt 864